Trusting the Lord with Our Children

(An Email Exchange with my Granddaughter-in-Law "Ruth")

By

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Dear Christian Mothers,

Earlier this year my dear granddaughter-in-law Ruth and I had an exchange of emails that she said encouraged her. Due to her request in the first email (directly below), I'm putting them all together here in hopes they may be of encouragement to you as well. (I've changed all names except mine.)

On Sept. 7th , Ruth wrote:

Hi, Gramma, I have an idea for you. The emails between you and me regarding putting our children in the Lord's hands have been so helpful, not only for me, but also for several friends that I passed them on to (I hope it's ok with you that I did that!). My sister, a girlfriend from church my age, a woman ten years older, and a woman in her late 50s all were so blessed by your words (neat how you are an older woman to us all)! I've been thinking lately of telling you this and seeing what you thought about putting them out there with your resources. I would be ok with my emails to you being included if you think it makes more sense to do it in a back and forth format. I love you so much, and think it is awesome how God uses you in the lives of so many!

Ruth

A word of explanation. I'm truly an "older woman" (84 this month)! I have 7 children, 7 grandchildren, and 2 darling great-grandbabies (thank you, Ruth!!). My "resources" she refers to are the more than 50 Bible audios I've made for children. In case you're interested, these audios and their pdfs are available for free downloading here on archive.org.

Okay, now on to what Ruth wanted me to share with you.

On June 10th , Ruth wrote:

Hi, Gramma! I was wondering whether I could ask you an in-depth question. If it seems like it

would take too much effort to answer, please don't feel obligated! But I know you have so much wisdom, and I would be blessed by anything you have to say.

I recall at some point hearing you say "once I turned my kids over to the Lord, I had more peace." I was wondering what that meant in your life; turning them over in what way, what brought you to the realization that it was something you needed to do, how you went about doing it, etc., and the difference it made for you in your walk with the Lord.

I think the Lord is convicting me of some things as a mom, and I thought hearing what you have learned would be helpful.

But again, if it takes too much time, don't worry about it! I love you,

Ruth

On Jun 10th , I replied:

Hi, Ruth,

Let's see if I can write sensibly here!

I'm a natural born worrier, and I used to feel that **I** had to keep my kids safe. I felt that I needed to worry about them or things would go wrong. (Am I making any sense at all?) About 25 years ago, finally at one point when things were going badly with some of them, I suddenly realized one day as I was driving down toward the freeway (I can still see the place in my mind), that there was nothing **I** could do about the situations. I couldn't make things right with the one child's life and I couldn't make another child well. I had always known that God was in charge and could take care of them, but I'd never acted like I knew it. (Again, am I making any sense?) I knew God was loving and merciful and kind and all powerful, but I had been acting and feeling as if He couldn't take care of my children without me. So right then and there I said, "God, I'm at the end of my rope. I can't do anything about these things. Only You can. And I'm putting my children in Your powerful, loving hands. Please have mercy on them, and please let me rest in You." I had let go. And it was a wonderful feeling.

That doesn't mean that I was then indifferent to my children and their problems. No. I still prayed for them. I was still concerned for them. I still tried to be a good mother and do what mothers should do. I still tried to do my best for them. But I didn't worry about them as I had before. There was Someone much more powerful than I who was taking care of the things I couldn't take care of.

Ruth, you have a very tender conscience, and I feel that you expect too much of yourself. You can't be perfect! Only Jesus is! But you are a wonderful mother (and wife). You act very wisely

and kindly and (in my opinion) correctly in dealing with the 3 (!) men in your life! I've been amazed at how well you do with your children. So don't be hard on yourself.

I have never seen you do anything that I thought you should have done differently. I feel that you deal with your children much better than I did with mine. And if you can not wait until your children are almost grown to turn them over to the Lord (as I did), I'm sure that you will have more peace and also have more confidence in both the Lord and in yourself.

Ruth, our God is an awesome God in the real sense of the word "awesome". He loves you; He loves your dear little boys (even more than you can love them!); He is able to take care of your sons (of course, He doesn't change their diapers, etc.; that's why He made mommies!). But He can take care of them in the ways that you and all the worry in the world can not take care of them. The Lord expects us to do the things that we are supposed to do in raising our children, of course, but other things (for instance, their health and their souls) are in His hands. In those cases all we can really do is to pray (and try not to worry!). Pray; don't worry; then leave the Lord in charge. That doesn't mean you don't care anymore; it just means that you are trusting the Lord, resting in Him. God knows what He is doing!! "Thy will be done."

I'm sure you've heard many people say, "I give my problems over to the Lord -- then I take them back again!" That's so human!! But we need to pray and ask the Lord to help us leave our problems with Him and for us just to do the things we are able to do.

Another way to put this is for us just to realize that our heavenly Father is the "5 Star General", and we are just privates (I guess that makes your dear hubby a corporal!)!! Privates and corporals don't do the General's work -- and aren't expected to. Also, privates and corporals don't worry about whether the General is going to do His job correctly -- they just leave that up to the General. So the General gets His work done without the private or corporal's having worried about it!!

I know I've rambled on, but I find this all quite difficult to put into words. I do hope that it has been a little help to you, Ruth.

I love you very much,

Gramma

On Jun 11th, Ruth wrote:

Hi, Gramma,

Wow, thank you so much for taking the time to write this for me (especially when you are sick!). I read it yesterday, and just finished reading through it for the second time. There is so much comfort and wisdom and gracious challenge here that is just what I needed to hear. I praise God for His blessing on me through you in my struggle!

Pretty much since Peter [3 years old] was born, I have struggled on and off with inordinate fear that the kids will be kidnapped or taken by government under false accusations. I know it sounds so silly. I had a difficult and dangerous neighbor when Peter was born as well as some post-partum issues. That and then just the plain old sin of anxiety and wanting to be in control!! So I don't think I ever fully worked through it, and recently I feel that the Lord has been whispering to me to deal with it- that it is a fear that can trump my wholesale abandon to the Lord, and He wants me to deal with it now. As if I have any control to relinquish anyway! At my small group the other night I shared this struggle, and they encouraged me to focus on what the Word says. They all mentioned verses that i know very well, and at first I felt annoyed (ha!) but I came to realize that although I know these verses, I am not availing myself of them in those moments of fear! I've been lazy with my mind and letting myself be bulldozed instead of battling these fears as I ought. Thank you so much for being willing to share your experience and life lessons with me, Gramma! It is very helpful. I love and admire you so very much.

Ruth

On Jun 14th , I replied:

Oh, you poor baby!!!!! You have been through so much mental anguish, Ruth!! I hadn't quite realized it before. I'm so very sorry for you! Here's a great big electronic hug [[me/you]] that I wish I could give you in person! Ruth, how you have suffered.

But again, dear Ruth, all I can say is that our God is truly an awesome and powerful God. He loves you and your little family more than we can ever comprehend. Put yourself and your little ones in His mighty hands -- then try not to jump out again! Over time it becomes easier to stay there, believe me!

For years I have prayed for you daily, but I now know more how to concentrate my prayers for you. Of course, the Spirit knows that better than I do!

Much love,
Gramma

On July 1st, Ruth wrote:

Hi, Gramma! I am sorry for such a tardy reply. Thank you so much for all your prayers over such a large span of time. That is a huge encouragement to me. And thank you for your wisdom and compassion. Gramma, God has used you so much to help me. I thought and prayed about what you said, and a little while ago God gave me strength to pray something like what you

prayed....and it is amazing, Gramma- I have so much more joy and peace, and I feel closer to my Father!

I also wanted to tell you that the boys absolutely LOVE the Bible songs cd* you made them. They listen to it over and over. Andrew [1 ½ years old] even walked up to the cd-player and said, "Hi!" once! It is so awesome, Gramma! What a wonderful learning tool, and how much love went into it! It ministers to us all.

We love you!
Ruth

On July 5th, I wrote:

Dear Ruth,

I'm so glad that I have been able to encourage you. We all need encouragement!!

Ruth, the devil will try to discourage you and make you lose your peace. He delights in making us doubt our loving heavenly Father. So when that happens (and it will!), just think back on God's promises. God always keeps His promises. We can rely on that even though we ourselves are weak. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and don't lean on your own understanding." Forget what you are thinking, and think on God's word instead. "I will never leave you nor forsake you." The Bible is full of encouraging promises to you, God's dearly loved child. Think on those when you begin doubting. Hold fast to His big, tender hand!!

I'm really glad the boys like the songs*! That is encouraging to me! Thanks!!

Heaps of love,

Gramma

*The songs are on one of the audios ("Singing Through the Bible with Sunday School Songs") on archive.org that I referred to earlier.